This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Autism	Benzodiazepine receptor (peripheral)-associated protein 1 (BZRAP1); MAM domain containing	<p>A genomewide study suggests that <i>BZRAP1</i> and <i>MDGA2</i> are potential markers for increased risk of autism. In a copy number variation study, autism correlated with deletions in <i>BZRAP1</i>, which encodes an adaptor molecule that regulates synaptic transmission, deletions in <i>NRXN1</i>, which encodes a neuronal cell-adhesion protein previously identified as a potential risk locus, and deletions in <i>MDGA2</i>, a gene that is homologous to the autism-associated gene <i>CNTN4</i>. Future studies could include investigating the roles these genes play in autism and whether they could be targeted to treat the indication. Partners Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. and Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. have the antipsychotic Abilify aripiprazole in Phase III testing to treat autism and autism spectrum disorders. Curemark LLC's CM-AT, a powder that aids in protein digestion, is in Phase III testing to treat autism.</p> <p>SciBX 2(27); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1087 Published online July 16, 2009</p>	Patented; available for licensing	<p>Bucan, M. <i>et al.</i> <i>PLoS Genet.</i>; published online June 26, 2009; doi:10.1371/journal.pgen.1000536 Contact: Hakon Hakonarson, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pa. e-mail: hakonarson@chop.edu Contact: Maja Bucan, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa. e-mail: bucan@pobox.upenn.edu</p>